Investment in food processing industry

1337. SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to relax conditions for investors who want to invest in food processing industry;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) how many investment proposals are pending with Government, State-wise; and

(d) how much investment materialised in this sector, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY): (a) to (d) No licence is required from the Ministry of Food Processing Industries for starting new Food Processing Industries. The Ministry of Food Processing Industries has implemented schemes to extend financial assistance in the nature of grants to entrepreneurs willing to set up food processing industries, *viz.,* Scheme for Technology Upgradation/ Establishment/Modernization of Food Processing Industries in all the State and Union Territories. Rate of grant-in-aid is 25% of the Plant & Machinery and Technical Civil Works in general areas subject to maximum, of Rs. 50/- lakhs and 33.33% of the Plant & Machinery and Technical Civil Works in difficult areas including Sikkim and other North Eastern States subject to a maximum of Rs. 75 lakh.

With a view to step up food-processing industries Government has also formulated and implemented schemes for infrastructure creation, R&D activities, laboratory infrastructure and HRD activities besides other promotional measures to encourage the development of Food Processing Industries.

In order to give boost to growth of FPI sector, the Government has allowed in 2004-05, under Income Tax Act, a deduction of 100% of profit for 5 years and 25% of profits for the next 5 years in case of new agro-processing industries set up to process, preserve and package fruits and vegetables. Fruit and vegetable products are already exempted from the payment of excise duty. Customs duty on refrigerated vans reduced from 20% to 10%. In the budget of 2006-07, customs duty on packaging

machines has been reduced from 15% to 5%, excise duty on condensed milk, ice-cream, preparations of meat, fish and poultry, pectins, pasta and yeast are fully exempt, excise duty on ready to eat packaged foods and instant food mixes, like Dosa and Idli mixes, reduced from 16% to 8%, excise duty on areated drinks has been reduced from 24% to 16% and excise duty on packaging paper has been reduced from 16% to 12%.

Accordingly to. estimates, Rs. 38,000 crore was invested during the 9th Plan in the food processing sector. Investment is likely to be of the order of Rs. 62,000 crores during the 10^{th} Plan Period.

Universities in the country

1338. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of universities in the country, State-wise;

(b) the number of Government universities recognised and private universities in the country, State-wise;

(c) the financial assistance provided by UGC/Union Government, State-wise to Government/recognised and private universities during the last three years, university-wise and State-wise; and

(d) by when all the universities in the country would be declared to be Government universities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATMI): (a) and (b) According to the University Grants Commission (U.G.C), there are 357 Universities and equivalent institutions at present. The number of U.G.C. recognized Universities and equivalent institutions is enclosed as statement (See below).

(c) A statement showing the grants paid by UGC to Universities under Plan and Non plan during 2002-03, 2003-04 and 2004-05 for which information is available, at the Annexure. [See Appendix 208, Annexure No. 3]

(d) The Government has no such proposal.